

GOLD



COAST

REPORT
ON THE
ENQUIRY INTO BEGGING
AND
DESTITUTION
IN THE
GOLD COAST
1954

GOLD COAST

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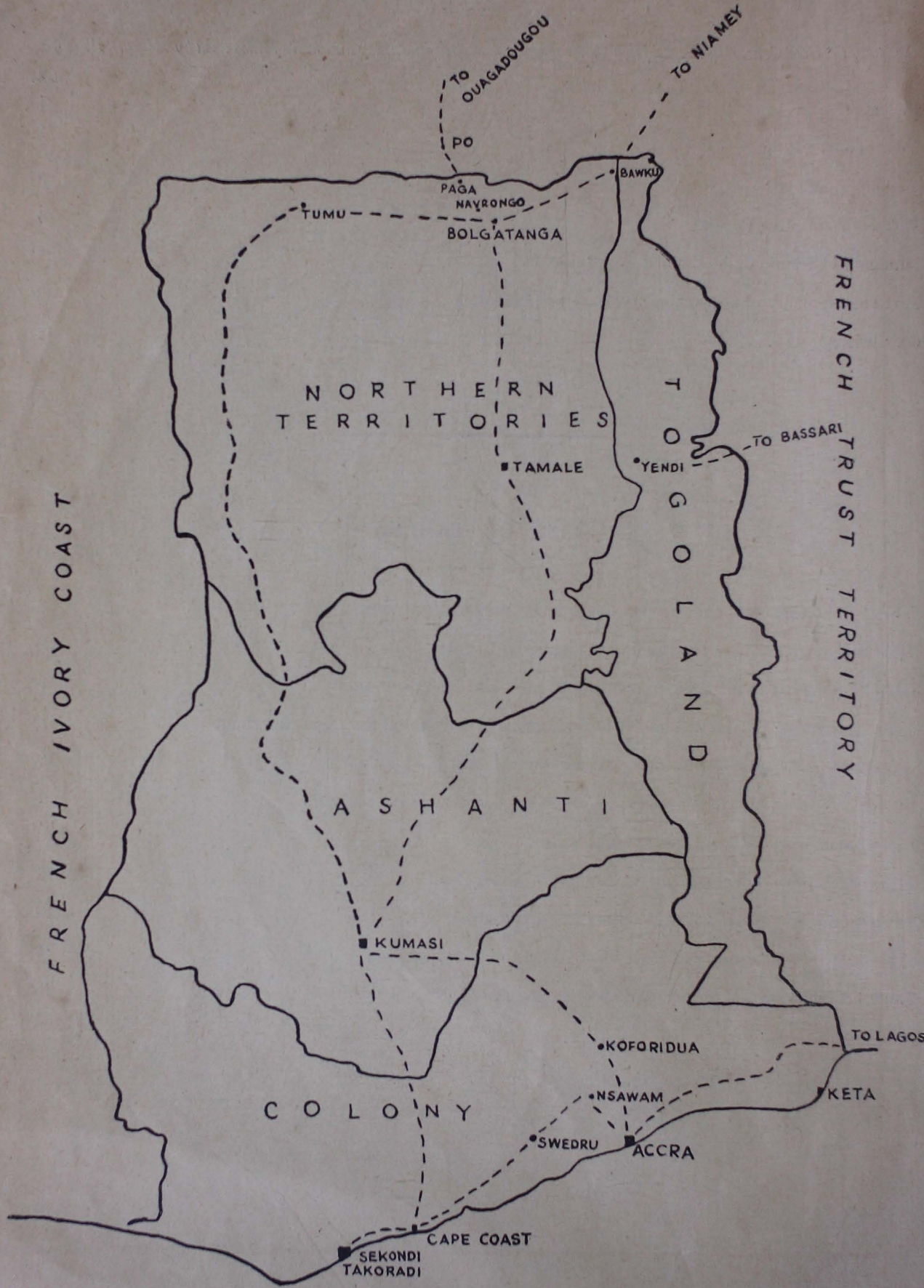
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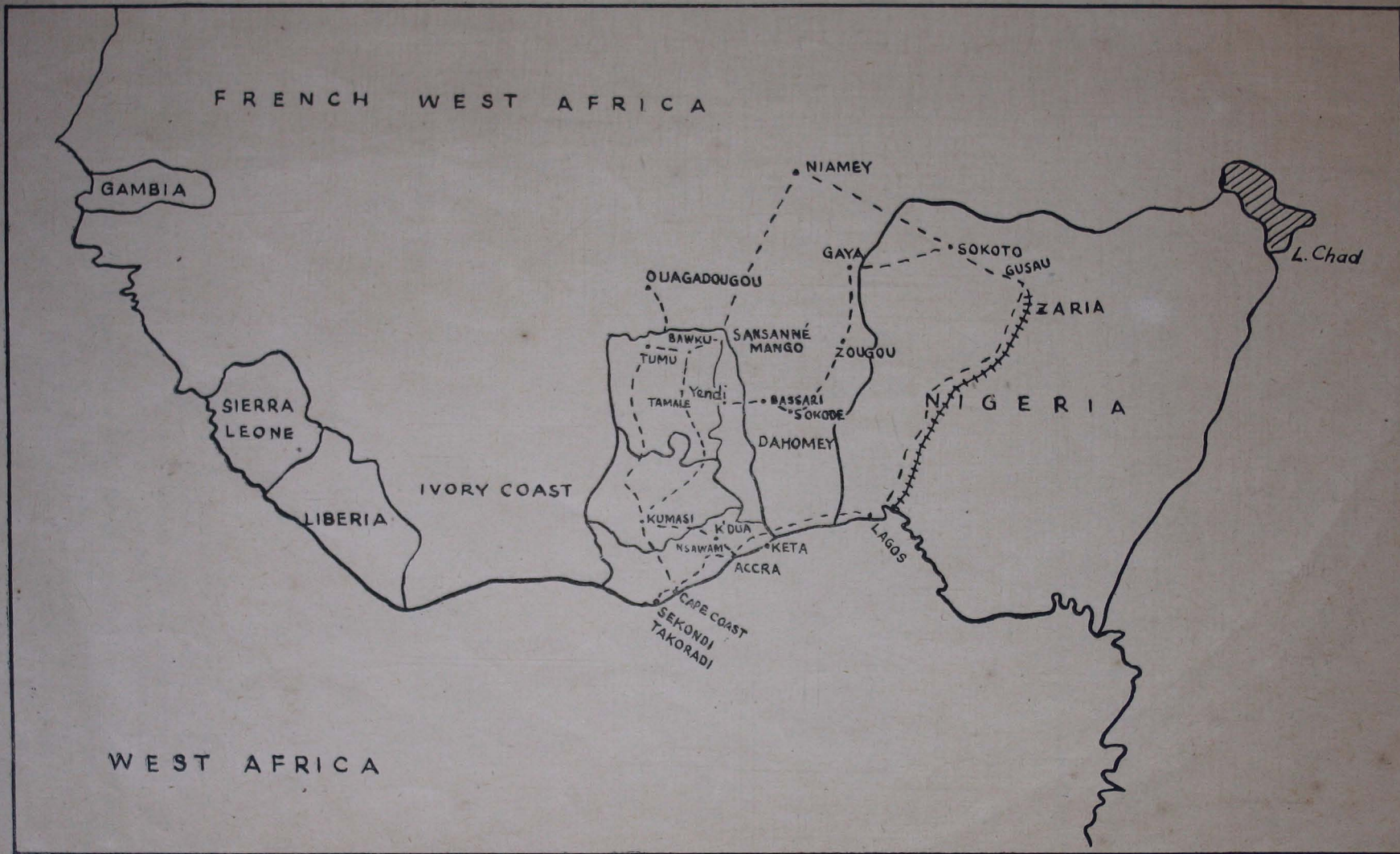
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FRENCH TERRITORY



MAP I. MAIN ROUTES USED BY MIGRANTS IN THE GOLD COAST



MAP 2. ROUTES USED BY MIGRANTS FROM NORTHERN NIGERIA

Report on Begging and Destitution in the Gold Coast, 1954

INTRODUCTION

Within recent years there seems to have been a sudden increase in the number of persons found begging in the streets of the larger towns of the Gold Coast. The public have expressed concern at the sight of dirty and mentally defective people lying about in the road or on the sidewalks. In a rapidly developing country some provision has to be made for handicapped people when the problem assumes striking proportions. For this reason one or two previous attempts have been made to determine the number of Destitutes in different towns in the country.

2. Dr. Busia, in his Survey of Sekondi/Takoradi in 1948 examined a sample of 30 Destitutes there and found 2 Aliens from Nigeria, 16 people from the Northern Territories, 1 Ewe, 7 Fantis and 4 Achantas. Of these, 2 were aged, 16 were sick and 12 were unemployed. These results are interesting in view of our findings six years later when old age figures prominently among causes of destitution and unemployment scarcely at all.

3. District Commissioners for eight towns conducted an enquiry in 1951 into the incidence of destitution in their areas. Their estimates were as follows:—

Accra	57
Sekondi/Takoradi	40 or over
Koforidua	up to 40
Keta/Tarkwa	20-30 each
Cape Coast/Oda/Dunkwa	10-15 each.

A few of these were described as Professional Beggars, the majority were said to be Destitutes, about two-thirds of the latter strangers who had arrived in the town destitute. It is not clear whether the strangers were Aliens or Gold Coast people from distant parts of the country. These figures are interesting in view of our findings three years later when the number of Professional Beggars exceeds the number of Genuine Destitutes. It is worth noting that the figure given for Accra is remarkably low compared with the results obtained in 1953 and 1954.

4. In 1952 a Working Party was set up by Government to examine the problem of Destitution in the Gold Coast. Their definition of a Destitute Person was: any person who is unable to obtain for himself/herself, by means of work, employment, regular income or care by his or her family or friends (a) enough food and clothing to keep his or her body healthy or/and (b) adequate permanent shelter from the elements when required. This definition if applied literally in this country would include among Destitutes some daily paid labourers and others whose wages do not always permit them, when paying rent for accommodation in towns, to buy proper food for their physical requirements. The Working Party therefore considered that those classed as Destitutes would comprise:—

- Derelict Labourers
- The Physically Handicapped
- The Aged and Infirm
- The Mentally Deranged or Feeble-minded.

Figures with regard to these four categories were collected from Government Departments concerned. There does not appear to have been any attempt to assess the number of persons found in the streets and not necessarily known to Government Departments. The results for 1952 were as follows:—

Accra	69
Sekondi/Takoradi	56
Koforidua	40
Keta	25
Tarkwa	29
Cape Coast	26
Oda/Dunkwa	10 each
Kumasi	88 (36 in the Destitute Hostel).

This is the first time an estimate was given for Kumasi and it is obvious that the problem here was important. There is evidence of a slight increase in Accra, Sekondi and Cape Coast particularly as figures obtained from Government Departments such as Labour, Police and Medical might be expected to omit the Professional Beggar who was not well known in the place, but who seems to have been included in the 1951 estimate.

5. In September, 1953, the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development carried out Street Counts and Interviews in six large towns with the object of obtaining greater details and some indication of methods of treatment. The method and time spent on counting varied from place to place but no records of the interviews were kept except in Accra. The results obtained from the counts were as follows:—

Accra	182	(145 Beggars)
Sekondi/Takoradi	62	(30 "
Koforidua	92	(54 "
Cape Coast	42	(32 "
Kumasi	137	(23 "

Unfortunately the definition of the term Beggar was not very clear, and as all Destitutes beg there was obviously some confusion in the results in some places. The smaller out-stations were omitted from this count and it is worth noting that so far no estimate of the problem in the Northern Territories had been attempted.

6. An examination of the results of this count suggested that some were suspiciously large and that duplication might have taken place. An analysis of the 146 Interview Records from Accra showed that figures by themselves were misleading and the problem of Destitution was in reality a problem of organised, professional begging plus a problem of real destitution very much smaller than the over-all totals seemed to imply. The records also showed a number of Aliens from Nigeria visiting the country for short periods with the stated object of making money by begging.

It was therefore decided to undertake a fresh count in July and August, 1954 covering the following places, Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi/Takoradi, Cape Coast, Koforidua, Nsawam, Swedru, Keta, Tamale and Bolgatanga and to try and distinguish between Professional Beggars and Destitutes in need of assistance, their disabilities and places of origin. The Department of Social Welfare already had a scheme in hand for providing a Central Infirmary for Destitutes, to be built in Bekwai, Ashanti, and was therefore particularly anxious to discover the probable number of those for whom provision would have to be made.

7. Figures by themselves are only the bare bones of the problem and we have made a special effort this year to find out the human story behind the total count of men and women begging on the streets. We have added 150 interviews to those already recorded. By this means the beggars have told their own story and given us facts, not always reliable no doubt, as to where they sleep, where they come from, how long they have been in the town and how much they earn daily by begging. Some spoke freely, some could not or would not answer questions, but what they did tell us, supported by the things we observed for ourselves, throws a new light on the problem and should make it possible to see what is really happening in the towns of the Gold Coast.

8. The Field Work was carried out by two students on vacation, Mr. Adame Labi of the University College of the Gold Coast and Mr. B. Selormey of the Kumasi College of Technology, who visited each town in turn and were responsible for all observations and interviews. Street Counts were carried out by these two students assisted by the Staff of the Department of Social Welfare from each Regional Office and by Hausa speaking Interpreters. Without their enthusiasm and patient work it would not have been possible to collect all the facts needed for this Report and we owe them a debt of gratitude for their vacation service.

9. All the facts mentioned in this Report are based on observation and direct evidence. It was intended to be a fact-finding exercise and is not concerned with recommendations for future action affecting Government Policy. The Conclusions, therefore, deal only with matters arising out of the Report and do not follow the usual practice of suggesting methods of alleviation or reform.

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND
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OBJECTS OF THE ENQUIRY

1. To discover by means of Street Counts in 11 towns approximately how many Beggars and Destitutes were to be found at a fixed time on a fixed day in each place. The problem of Beggars and Destitutes is fluid, there are seasonal increases and decreases and a constant stream of vagrants moving from place to place. No count of these people can produce a final answer. We hoped by means of a planned and synchronised count to avoid duplication and discover the more important features of the situation.

2. To discover whether there was any noticeable increase of Beggars and Destitutes on a Friday compared with those found on other week-days in view of the religious and customary sanction for begging and almsgiving on the Mohammedan Holy Day.

3. To distinguish between four tribal groupings—Hausa, Northern Territories, Aliens and Ashanti/Colony in order to discover how many local Gold Coast people were involved.

4. To distinguish and classify Beggars and Destitutes according to their disabilities to find out which predominated.

5. To distinguish between the Professional Beggar and the Needy Destitute. This could only be approximate but the distinction is so essential to an understanding of the problem that it could not be omitted.

6. To obtain some check on the information shown in street counts by means of careful observation of Beggars and Destitutes in the streets, sample recorded interviews of each category and reference to the recorded deaths of destitute persons during the past year in 5 of the main towns.

7. To obtain information from Sirikin Zongo and other Chiefs in the larger towns with regard to the movements and routes of beggars who enjoy the Chiefs' hospitality.

8. To produce by this means a descriptive Report based on first-hand evidence, supported by statistics and representative of the country as a whole.

METHODS EMPLOYED

The required information was obtained by the following methods:—

1. Documentary Evidence of deaths of destitute persons obtained through the office of the Medical Officers of Health.
2. Token Street Counts of Beggars and Destitutes in 11 towns.
3. Recorded observation of each section of each town undertaken at different times of the day.
4. Recorded sample interviews with Beggars and Destitutes based on a few simple questions.
5. Personal interviews with Zongo Chiefs in the larger towns.

1. *Staff.*—Two Investigators were responsible for the observation and interviews, by this means the danger of a variety of personal opinions was lessened. The interviews done in Accra last year by different people were used as a check on this year's results. We did not interview again in Accra. Local staff and Interpreters were used for counting.

2. *Street Counts.*—These were planned to cover a period of two hours selected between 8 a.m. and 12 noon and all sections of a town were counted simultaneously to avoid duplication as far as possible. Observation had shown that Beggars are found in the centre of the town, near the main markets, Zongo and mosque area, lorry park, railway station and shopping centre during the morning after 8 a.m. or 9 a.m. By noon they have moved away. Earlier or later in the day they are in the Zongo or outlying parts of the town. It was more economical in staff and time to count them during the hours when they were concentrated in the centre of each town. Towns were divided into sections which could be counted adequately in the time. Two persons were allotted to each section and the same marking card was used throughout the count.

3. *Classification.*—All Hausa people were counted as Hausa whether local or alien as we wished to record this section separately on account of the religious and customary element in their begging. Aliens therefore meant other Nigerians or Kroos and those people from French Territory who could be readily identified.

Disabilities were counted according to the predominant handicap. Those suffering from blindness were counted as Blind whatever other misfortune they might suffer from. Those suffering from a minor deformity due to leprosy were counted as Lepers rather than Deformed. All Feeble-minded and Aged Beggars were classed as Destitutes, their begging is ineffective and they can be said to be in need of proper care and attention. Some of them did in fact live with relatives and were allowed to wander about all day but as they could not be successfully interviewed owing to their mental condition and could not be ignored owing to their nuisance value, we had to accept a slightly inflated figure where this group was concerned. Those suffering from a minor deformity not due to leprosy were classed as Beggars as they are sufficiently active to beg successfully according to their own evidence.

The distinction between professional beggar and needy destitute proved in practice less difficult than had been expected. It could only be approximate, but we knew from the analysis of the Accra interviews where 50 per cent were beggars that it was worth attempting. Professional beggars were defined on that occasion as those who had adequate shelter, i.e. lived in hired rooms, or with their relatives or in the house of the Zongo Chief and whose stated earnings by begging were 4s. a day or more. Such persons often living rent free and getting up to 8s. a day were able to feed themselves adequately and apart from their disability, showed by the condition of their skin and contours of the face that they did not suffer from lack of food. Their active and persistent method of appealing for alms indicated that they had been begging for some time and knew their job. Many of them were well known to the local staff. The Destitute, on the other hand, slept out in the open or on a verandah and had no secure shelter at night, or was housed with so-called friends. He looked feeble and sickly and earned according to himself from 1s. to 3s. a day. His method of begging was less confident and successful. The criterion was therefore appearance and behaviour supported by local knowledge and questions in cases of doubt. There was no special difficulty in making the distinction at either end of the scale but inevitably border-line cases in the middle section provided an opportunity for errors. It was expected that the final figures might involve as much as 10 per cent error but that some check would be provided by interviews.

4. *Time Factor.*—The following list shows the days and times when street counts were done in each town:—

Accra	..	..	..	Thursday, July 22nd	Friday, July 23rd	9-11 a.m.
Koforidua	..	..	..	Tuesday, Aug. 3rd	Friday, July 30th	9-11 a.m.
Nsawam	..	..	..	Thursday, Aug. 3rd		8.40-10.40 a.m.
Swedru	..	..	..		Friday, Aug. 6th	8.25-10 a.m.
Tamale	..	..	..		Friday, Aug. 13th	8.20 a.m.-12.15 p.m.
*Bolgatanga	..	..	..	Saturday, Aug. 14th		3.30 p.m.-5.25 p.m.
Cape Coast	..	..	..	Monday, Aug. 16th	Friday, Aug. 13th	8 a.m.-10 a.m.
Takoradi	..	..	..	Thursday, Aug. 19th	Friday, Aug. 20th	9-11 a.m.
Sekondi	..	..	..	Thursday, Aug. 19th	Friday, Aug. 20th	8-10 a.m.
Kumasi	..	..	..	Tuesday, Aug. 31st		8.30-10.30 a.m.
Keta	..	..	..	Saturday, Sept. 4th		9.30-11.30 a.m.

*The count in Bolgatanag was done later in the day than had been intended owing to breakdown of transport.

In five towns two counts were done, one of them on a Friday. In the remaining six towns only one count was possible so as to fit in with the available Fridays without unduly prolonging the enquiry which might then have been complicated by seasonal movements among beggars.

The two Investigators spent from a week to 10 days in each of the large towns recording observations and interviews. This procedure was omitted in Swedru, Nsawam and Keta where the numbers found in one count were very small and was not possible in Bolgatanga where a flying visit only could be made. Interviews were based on a simple set of questions and interpreters were used where necessary.

PART I—DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

1. The problem of Beggars and Destitutes is a serious one in the largest towns and of very little significance elsewhere. A few of these people are to be found in any place of any size situated on a main road, they are mostly senile or feeble-minded, local or vagrant. Wherever there is a Zongo there will be beggars on Friday. In the villages the situation is different. Ignorance and superstition in the more remote places account for some neglect of handicapped persons especially small children. Seasonal shortage of food, especially in the North, causes hunger among the poorest section of the community but we have no evidence of the extent of this and for the purpose of the present enquiry the Rural Areas have been ignored.

2. The total number of Beggars and Destitutes counted was 596, a further 33 were inmates of the two Destitutes Hostels in Accra and Kumasi, so that we can say with reasonable certainty that about 700 Beggars and Destitutes existed in the Gold Coast at the end of August 1954. More than half of these were classed as Professional Beggars in the South; Destitutes predominated in the North. The proportion varied in the different towns and was higher in Accra than Kumasi. Allowing for errors of counting and possible stringency we can estimate that from 55 per cent to 65 per cent of Beggars in the South are Professional Beggars earning a living which is no worse than that of a daily paid Labourer. Their security is greater, they cannot be out of work as long as there is a sympathetic public and those who work systematically are able to earn considerable sums of money.

3. A Professional Beggar who starts work, as many do, at 6.15 a.m. catches people on their way to work, later in the morning he takes up his position near the market, mosque or shopping centre and begs till noon. He may return to his task to catch people on their way home from work and by 6 p.m. goes home himself. By this means he can earn from 5s. to 10s. a day and more on a Friday. A very few mentioned even larger sums. The less energetic can get from 4s. to 6s. The Destitute, of course, is not so successful. Several Able-bodied Beggars told us they were not interested in work as they had found begging more lucrative. Many are incapable of work and have been begging all their lives. Some of them told us that they lived in hired rooms, alone or shared with other beggars and paid rents varying from 6s. to 15s. a month, rather less in Tamale. Some live at home with relatives or with a husband or wife who is also a beggar, a very few had houses of their own. Hausa Beggars who are strangers in the town may live free in the house of the Zongo Chiefs. Sirikin Zongo in Accra told us of a man who had lived for some time in his house, married a wife and brought her there and now had a child as well. In Accra, but not elsewhere, these beggars staying in the Chief's house are given two free meals a day, a fact which the beggars confirmed. The Chief estimates that he spends about £4 a day on food for them. In Kumasi they receive shelter only. One Chief in Kumasi told us he considered some beggars earned £30 to £40 a month and could afford to eat better food than many people. All the beggars when they arrive tell him they have no money and if necessary he pays their lorry fares for them. None of them give him anything when they leave, which may be after several months or even longer.

4. There was an noticeable increase of Beggars and Destitutes on Friday wherever two counts were made. This is understandable because 353 out of the total of 596 were Hausa people and of these 273 were classed as Professional Beggars. Interviews tended to confirm this and showed evidence of what might be termed the tourist traffic from Northern Nigeria, particularly Sokoto. In a sample of 150 interviews we found 49 persons who had come from Sokoto, most of them very recently. Common answers were 2 weeks, 1 month, 2 months for the time they had been in the Gold Coast although there were others who had lived in the country for years. Information supplied by the Zongo Chiefs and by these beggars themselves, showed that they walked to Kano, travelled free on the train to Lagos, begging in towns en route. In Lagos they begged again until they had money to pay their fare to Accra. Occasionally they travelled free or for a reduced fare if their condition appealed to the lorry driver's sympathy.

5. These Beggars mostly come for periods of 6 months or so, staying free in the house of the Zongo Chief in Accra or with friends for 3 or 4 months and then going on to Kumasi to repeat the process. The Zongo Chief in Koforidua told us that the train guards and lorry drivers were kind and often allowed them to travel free. Some stopped in his town to beg for a few days and sometimes stole his goods. The Beggars themselves said they had been told by friends that people in the Gold Coast were sympathetic towards them and had come to see for themselves or had been persuaded to join their friends on their next visit. Many were perfectly Able Bodied and said they had houses and farms at home which they had left in the care of relatives. They came away after the Spring Sowing and might return home for the harvest or might wait until the next Sowing was due. One man said he would go home when he had collected £100. A few came because there was no one at home to care for them and they could not earn enough by begging there.

6. There were also Beggars from French Haute Volta who had come south to beg, but on the whole it is probably true to say that those from the French Northern Territories come south to look for work in the first instance and take to begging as the result of sickness or misfortune, while the beggars from Sokoto and Kano come simply to beg. The improved condition of the main roads and the increased lorry traffic on them since the end of war restrictions on petrol and vehicles has made it possible for this anonymous group of Beggar Adventurers to travel north and south from Accra to Tamale and east and west from Lagos to Sekondi with greater ease than ever before. There seems no reason why their number should not increase each year.

7. The Street Count totals for Accra and Kumasi were four times greater than those of any other town. The figures for last year indicated a rather similar position but previous estimates for the two towns had not shown anything like that result. Both Accra and Kumasi are naturally attractive centres for Beggars but it looks as if the startling increase in numbers has something to do with the number of Aliens from Northern Nigeria who are finding it profitable to make the long journey now that it does not have to be done on foot for so much of the way. Only a few make their way direct to Tamale by the North-eastern routes through Nyamey and Bawku, or Zugu, Sokode, Basare and Yendi.

8. There is no particular evidence of any increase in real Destitution, in fact it may even be on the decline. Figures for Sekondi, Cape Coast, Koforidua and Destitutes only, in Accra and Kumasi, are much the same as they were four years ago. The Death Rate shown by recorded Destitute Deaths in these towns was 193 for the year June 30th 1953 to June 30th 1954. This means that if the figures for Destitutes in these towns are practically the same to-day as they were two or more years ago, there must be a steady rate of replacement of those who die each year. This is an important consideration in view of any provision that may be made for Beggars and Destitutes. Those who are receiving care and attention in Hostels or Institutions will naturally survive longer than they would have done if left to fend for themselves on the streets. If provision were made for all those in urgent need to-day, others would take their place gradually until in due course there were more than could be accommodated. There is no hard and fast line between Beggar and Destitute, no static group to be catered for, those who may be able to earn an adequate living for a time will, if they fall sick, join the ranks of the Destitutes and barely manage to eke out an existence. It is only in the upper strata of Professional Beggars that there is some security.

9. We did not expect the statements made by beggars about their earnings to be accurate, they were more likely to be an under-estimation than an exaggeration. In Tamale and Bolgatanga food was given rather than money; in Koforidua no one would tell us anything about their earnings. In the other large towns 129 volunteered information about their daily earnings and of these 56 said they got from 4s. up to 10s. a day and more on Friday, the others varied from a few pence to 3s. a day.

10. The largest single group among the disabled was the Blind. We found 173 of them, some had begged all their lives, most of them were organised into Blind Communities living in the Zongo, a few were vagrants begging on their own. Lepers and Sick persons were the next most important group, we found them everywhere and most of them seemed to need assistance. The total number of apparently Able Bodied Beggars was about one-sixth of all those found on the streets. They had no obvious disability and none of those interviewed either this year or last year in Accra expressed any desire for work, they considered begging more lucrative. They could become a serious problem.

11. We hear from time to time of the nuisance caused by Mentally Eccentric and feeble-minded persons. We found 82 of them in the count, some harmless and living with relatives, many who should undoubtedly be removed to a place where they can be cared for and prevented from wandering. Their physical condition and clothing, when they have anything more than a loin cloth, is filthy. They squat on pavements and outside shops surrounded by bits of garbage they have collected, searching for lice in their rags. They sleep in the open in odd places, wander about among the traffic and become a nuisance in crowded markets. Children tease them and they then sometimes become violent. We found them everywhere and they formed the largest group among the Destitutes. By no means all of them could be certified as insane and legislation would be needed if they were to be removed and kept under restraint. They could not be interviewed and we have very little information about their lives.

12. Old people were in evidence everywhere, many of them Hausas living in the local Zongo. Among this group of Aged and Infirm people were those from beyond the Border who had worked most of their lives in the Gold Coast but were too old or too feeble to continue work and had been so long away from their families that they no longer knew if they had relatives living who might care for them. They were particularly noticeable in Tamale where there is no provision for Destitutes. They had drifted north and had stopped there before attempting to make their way on beyond the Border. Their begging was not very effective and some of them were in need of proper care.

13. Destitution is mainly a question of old, feeble-minded and sick people. We found 217 Destitutes in the Count, 92 of them belonging to Gold Coast Tribes. This is possibly a little misleading as the Hausas in this group tend to come from the local Zongos and may have lived all their lives in this country although they are Nigerians. We could not distinguish between them and newcomers and the figure of 92 therefore relates to people of purely Gold Coast origin. They are not a large group as shown in a token count but it is misleading to think of them as a static one, the level of the group may be maintained but the persons composing it are constantly changing.

14. Each town has its own variation of the problem. In Sekondi and Cape Coast there seems to be a small local group well-known in the community and much less affected by vagrants than is the case in other large towns. Kumasi has a constantly changing beggar population. The Destitute deaths in Kumasi were twice as high as those of any other town recorded. There is also a seasonal increase from the end of August until late in October which coincides with the Cocoa season, in Accra the seasonal increase is a little earlier.

In Tamale and the North beggars beg for food and the problem there is one of poverty, lack of sufficient food during the months before the harvest is ripe, old age and sickness. There is a seasonal element here as well. Some of the Migrant Labourers going south in search of work make the journey on foot. Tamale is a resting place for them before they make the long stage south into Ashanti. Some of them arrive sick, emaciated and needing care, some die. The Moshie Naba in Tamale, for example, houses the sick Moshies among this group in his compound and said he had personally paid for the funeral expenses of 18 Moshie strangers during the past year who had died in or near Tamale. They were referred to him by the Police or Hospital Authorities as there was no one else to provide for them.

DIAGRAM SHOWING TRIBAL GROUPS OF BEGGARS AND DESTITUATES

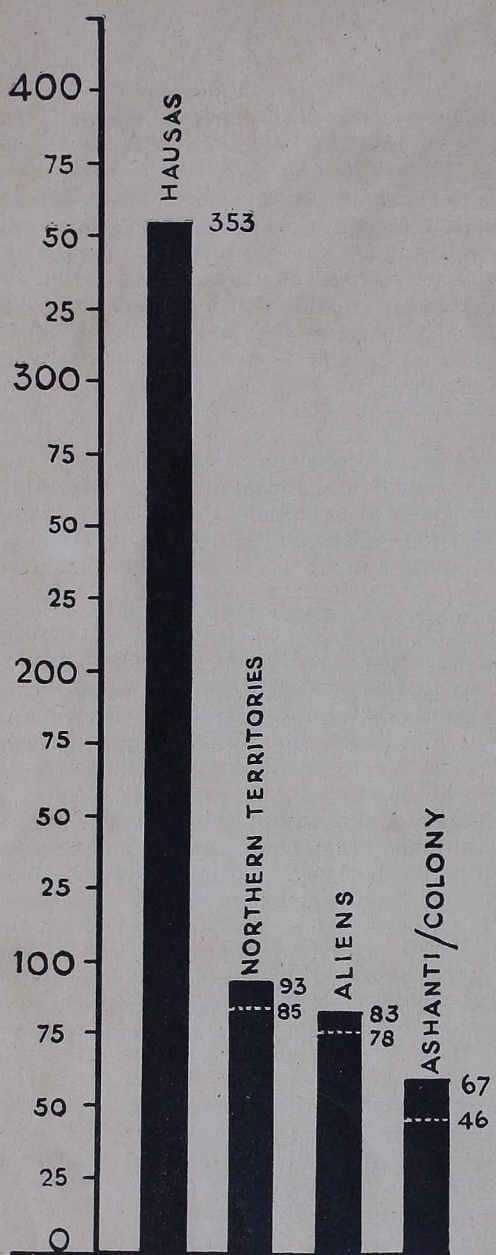


DIAGRAM SHOWING DISABILITY GROUPS OF BEGGARS AND DESTITUATES

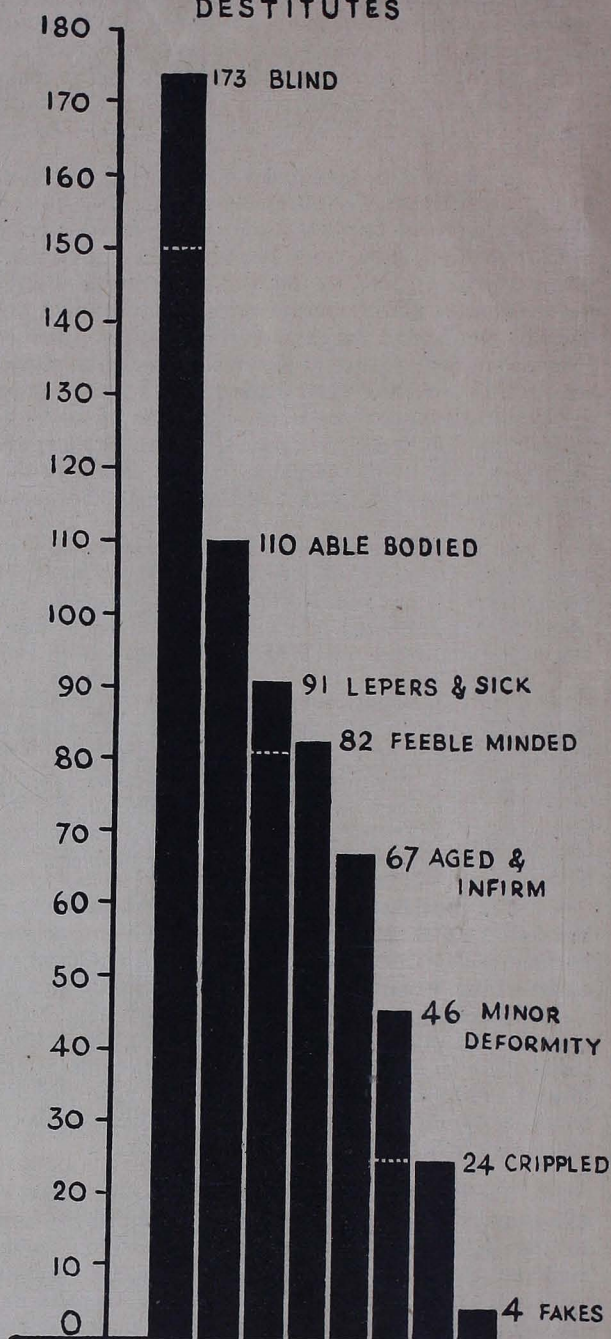
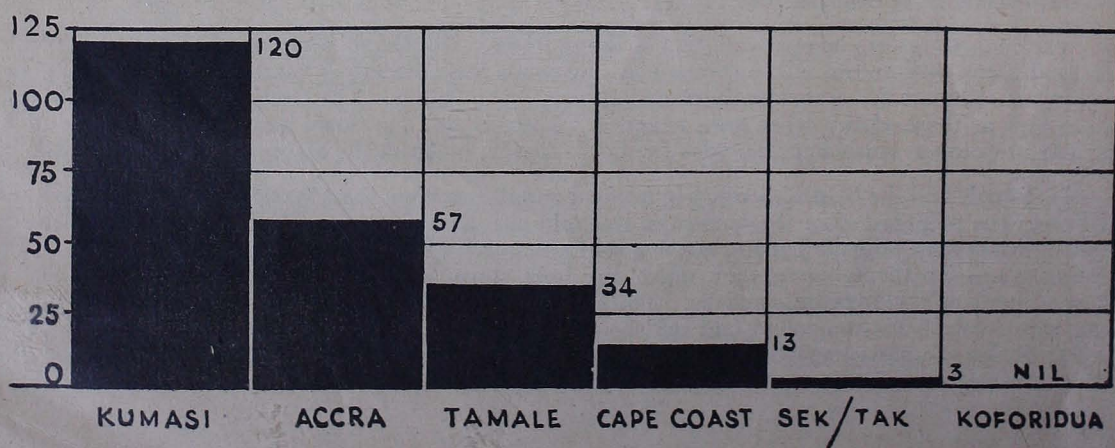


DIAGRAM SHOWING RECORDED DEATHS OF DESTITUTE PERSONS FOR ONE YEAR



15. In the Summary of Information which follows brief details are given of actual cases. Part II of the Report shows figures collected and tabulated on which the Descriptive Report is based.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM INTERVIEWS

THE BLIND

Blind Beggars, most of them Hausa peoples, predominate in nearly all towns. Many of them had gone blind very early in life, had never worked and had lived by begging for years. Others had been farmers, traders, policemen, labourers, etc., and gone blind later in life and been obliged to beg. Many were married and had wives and children with them, some had blind wives also begging. Blind women with husbands and children begged because they could not trade. A Moshie man found in Tamale had been begging for 20 years in Ashanti. An old Zabramah who went blind a few years ago had been brought to Bolgatanga on a donkey by his children and left there to beg as it was thought he would be better off. A cattle dealer from Wagadugu who went blind came to Accra hoping to be cured but was unsuccessful and remained to beg. An ex-Policeman from Nigeria who had gone blind had just arrived in Kumasi from Kano with his wife and child to beg. A Moshie who injured his eyes in an accident cutting wood and was treated at Agogo Hospital but could not be cured had been sent back to Bolgatanga by the Zongo Chief and begged in Bolgatanga for the past three years. A Hausa Blind man in Koforidua had arrived five months ago from Sokoto with his wife and three children to beg and hoped to go on to Kumasi. They had travelled free on the train and spent only three shillings on lorry fares.

THE ABLE-BODIED

Almost all these people are beggars and beggars not interested in work. A very few, classified as Destitutes, were strangers stranded in a town, not obviously sick, and willing to be sent home. The Able-Bodied were most noticeable in Accra and Kumasi but there were one or two in every town.

One in Accra lives in a hired room with friends and uses the proceeds of his begging to buy goods for trading. One used to be a Steward Boy but preferred begging, another left the Army for the same reason. A Hausa man who had lived 15 years in Kumasi had never worked, he paid 22s. a month for his hired room and earned 5s. to 10s. a day, sometimes £1. He was an energetic beggar. A woman in Tamale begged to keep herself and her husband as he was too old to work. A Hausa man newly arrived in Tamale intended to go home in time to plant his crops. He had come to beg and when given 3d. asked why it was not 1s. A young Zugu man came to Kumasi 3 years ago, had never worked, sleeps in the open and earns, so he says, 10s. to £1 a day. He came to make money and although he has relatives at home he does not intend to go back yet.

THE LEPERS AND SICK

These are a pathetic group of people many of whom are in genuine need of assistance. They were found everywhere except, as it so happens, in Koforidua and Nsawam. Some of the lepers were so deformed or disfigured by the disease that they could not work and the women among them did not want to go home in that condition but preferred to stay and beg where they were. Some came from Weija and the Kumasi C.D.H. to beg in the markets. Some had lost touch with their families or been rejected by them. The sick people in some cases were attending for Out-Patient treatment at Hospital or unable to pay for treatment. They were unfit for work for the time being and if they had no friends or relatives in town or had been ailing for a long time they were forced to beg. A few looked really ill.

A leper woman discharged from Weija with no nose left, wanders from Cape Coast to Accra begging as she does not want to go home. A leper man also discharged from Weija found his relatives would not keep him at home, he begs and wanders from place to place and occasionally visits his home. A leper woman from Akwapim contracted the disease and infected her two children. She left her husband and took the children with her to Kumasi where they live in a hired room for £1 a month. A Fulani who contracted leprosy as a boy spent 4 years in Yendi Leprosarium and was discharged cured. He had lost touch with his mother and returned to Bawku but found no one to care for him. He came to Tamale and tried to work, he lives in the Round House, sometimes does odd jobs of weeding and begs when he has nothing left. A Malam in Sekondi contracted leprosy, his sister looks after him and he begs. A fish seller in Accra lost all her fingers by leprosy and now begs as she cannot work.

A man in Accra who had recently had an operation and was unfit for work had no friends or relatives there and begged. A Fanti from Elmina was found in Tamale with a chronic sore on his foot. He had lived and worked many years in Kumasi. He refused to stay in Hospital because he could not sleep properly in a bed. He had lost touch with his relatives and begged. A Fulani from Dapango who had been a farmer at Prang contracted Tuberculosis and was begging in Tamale hoping to go back to his home. He slept with a watchman at night. A Hausa woman from Sokoto, looking very ill, was trying to make her way home from Kumasi and found begging in Tamale. The observer thought she had tuberculosis. Two men in the North said they had been refused treatment at Hospital because they could not pay for it. One had gone blind the other had V.D., both begged.

AGED AND INFIRM

Many of these people are living at home with relatives who may or may not look after them properly. More of them appear on Fridays when begging is easier. Some are old men whose wives and children are dead or widows in the same position. A number have worked as farmers, traders, etc., but felt they were too old to go on and started to beg before they became really infirm. Many live in the Zongo, a few are strangers who believe their relatives are all dead and their homes are too far away.

A Hausa woman used to be a foodseller in Kumasi market for many years. She and her husband are old and infirm, all their children are dead and both beg for a living. An Ewe woman in Koforidua came there with her husband many years ago. He is dead and she has no children. She was ejected from her condemned house and has gone slightly senile. A Sissala man used to be a member of the Gold Coast Constabulary. He retired to Tamale, his wife and children have left him. He has a house of his own, sells a little charcoal and begs. A Hausa man who used to sell firewood in Accra and has been 37 years in the Gold Coast and never once been home to Sokoto is now too old for work and begging in Tamale. Another Hausa found in Tamale had been a Sanitary Labourer at Akim Oda and worked also on the Kade-Huni Railway line. He has no wife or children and is too old for work. An Ahanta woman in Sekondi is properly looked after by her relatives but she delights in begging.

Feeble-minded and Eccentrics

Most of these people cannot be interviewed but some information was forthcoming from people in the town who knew them. They have all been classed as Destitutes although some live with their relatives and are harmless enough and well known in the town where they wander about and beg intermittently. Many of them are wanderers who could not be kept at home, a few of them are in a filthy physical condition, sleep out in the open on waste pieces of land and are a nuisance to the public. The feeble-minded were found in every town except Takoradi and were particularly noticeable in proportion to other Destitutes in Cape Coast and Keta.

A young Zabramah in Koforidua has been in the town for five months, his parents are dead. He is harmless and sleeps in the open. A Hausa woman in Koforidua has a husband and children in the Zongo. She went out of her mind three years ago and cannot bear to be spoken to. She sleeps anywhere in the open and seldom goes near her home. A mad-man in Tamale takes every coin he is given and at once goes and buries it in the ground. A senile Frafra woman in Tamale lives and sleeps in the market. An old Grumah man also lives in Tamale market, he sits quietly on the ground and refuses to speak to anybody. A Ga man lies outside the Zorro stores in Accra by a tailor's shop. He spends the whole day there, relieves himself frequently and the tailor complained bitterly of the dirt and stench he caused.

Cripples.

These form a comparatively small group, there are only a few of them in each town and none were found in Tamale, Bolgatanga, Nsawam and Keta. Only four came from Ashanti or the Colony, most of them were Hausas. This class included only those who are completely crippled and the majority have been like this most of their lives and have always lived by begging.

A cripple in Accra had been repatriated to French Territory but found no one to care for him and had returned to Accra. A boy of nine found in Accra had come from Sokoto with his parents' consent in the company of older beggars. A Hausa cripple in Kumasi who had lived many years in the Gold Coast had just come from Koforidua where he had been one of those seen in the street count. A Hausa cripple in Cape Coast had come from Swedru for a week's begging. He also had been included in the Swedru count. A Yoruba cripple sells cola nuts at home in Nigeria. He left his wife and two children in the care of relatives and came to Kumasi two weeks ago to beg. He hopes to return in a couple of months' time.

Minor Deformities

Some of these people had been injured in lorry accidents and lost a hand or foot or arm. They could have been helped by the provision of artificial limbs. Others had met with minor accidents and injured arms or legs so that they were unable to work at their former jobs and had taken to begging. It might have been possible in some cases to rehabilitate them.

An ex-Escort Policeman, Zabramah, in Accra had lost the full use of one arm and taken to begging. A Gao man who had lost his left arm had never worked. He came to Kumasi seven months ago, slept in the open with some carriers and travelled when he earned enough for his lorry fares. A Hausa man lost an arm in a lorry accident 30 years ago and has been begging ever since. He pays 15s. a month for a hired room. A young man injured in a lorry accident some years ago was begging in Accra. His mother is dead and his father in the Army takes no interest in him. An ex-Garden Boy injured in a lorry accident took to begging.

Fakes

There were very few of these. They pretend to suffer from a disability, fits, feeble mindedness or lameness but if watched for some time it is obvious that their disability is not serious and is assumed for the benefit of passers by.

PART II.—SUMMARY OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE AND STATISTICS

The following summary of the results obtained in the Enquiry provides evidence in support of statements made in the Descriptive Report.

1. BEGGARS AND DESTITUTES IN EACH TOWN

The maximum count produced 596 of both classes, the minimum 480. We have worked on the maximum results as being more likely to give a true picture than the minimum. In any limited count some Beggars are inevitably overlooked.

TABLE 1.—SHOWING MAXIMUM RESULTS BEGGARS/DESTITUTES IN EACH TOWN

Place	Total	Beggars	Destitutes	Per centage of Beggars
Accra	198	151	47	76%
Kumasi	180	117	63	65%
Tamale	45	16	29	35%
Sekondi	43	29	14	67%
Koforidua	31	13	18	42%
Cape Coast	25	17	8	68%
Takoradi	21	16	5	76%
Bolgatanga	20	5	15	25%
Nsawam	16	9	7	56%
Swedru	10	5	5	50%
Keta	7	1	6	7%
Total	596	379	279	63%

Note.—In Koforidua the number of Destitutes in the Maximum count appears unduly large but 17 out of 18 were Feeble-minded or Aged persons. There was some evidence that Beggars in this town connected the street count with an attempt by Government to tax them, the Zongo Chief was not particularly helpful and we cannot overlook the possibility that figures for Koforidua are an underestimation of their problem.

The proportion of Beggars to Destitutes is highest in Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi/Takoradi and Cape Coast. In the smaller places the old and feeble-minded sway the balance in favour of Destitutes. In the Northern Territories Destitutes predominate.

In Ashanti and the Colony the over-all percentage of Professional Beggars is 67 per cent of the total count in 9 towns, in the Northern Territories it is 32 per cent for the two towns, Tamale and Bolgatanga.

2. FRIDAY INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BEGGARS

In the towns where two counts were done there was an increase of 116 on the Friday count. The results were as follows.

TABLE 2.—SHOWING INCREASE OF BEGGARS AND DESTITUTES ON FRIDAYS

Place	Beggars		Destitutes		Totals		Increase
	Fri.	Other day	Fri.	Other day	Fri.	Other day	
Accra	151	100	47	30	198	130	68
Sekondi	29	19	14	14	43	33	10
Koforidua	13	11	18	3	31	14	17
Cape Coast	17	11	8	6	25	17	8
Takoradi.. .. .	16	8	5	—	21	8	13

The increase is noticeable in all five towns and is not only confined to Beggars. Some of those we interviewed told us they expected to earn a few extra shillings on a Friday and both Beggars and Destitutes turn out in full force on that day.

3. TRIBAL GROUPINGS AMONG BEGGARS AND DESTITUTES

The great majority of Beggars and Destitutes were Hausa people—59 per cent. The Northern Territories accounted for 17 per cent Aliens for 14 per cent, and only 10 per cent came from Ashanti or the Colony, including those from Togoland. The all-over totals were as follows:—

TABLE 3.—SHOWING TRIBAL GROUPS AMONG BEGGARS AND DESTITUTES

Origin	Beggars	Destitutes	Total
Hausa	273	80	353
Northern Territories	40	53	93
Aliens	38	45	83
Ashanti/Colony	28	39	67
Total	379	217	596

The figure of 273 Hausa Beggars is almost half the total count (596) and indicates that the problem of begging, at any rate, is closely connected with custom and religious sanction and for this reason cannot be solved simply by legislation or the provision of Hostel accommodation.

The number of Gold Coast people involved is surprisingly small if those living in the local Zongos are excluded, 68 Beggars and 92 Destitutes, a total of 160 out of 596.

4. CLASSIFICATION OF BEGGARS AND DESTITUATES ACCORDING TO DISABILITIES

There was no difficulty in classifying predominant disabilities and the figures given in the table below show the totals for each group.

TABLE 4.—SHOWING RELATIVE DISABILITIES OF BEGGARS AND DESTITUATES IN THE MAXIMUM COUNT

Disability	Total	Percentage	Beggars	Destitutes
Blind	173	29%	152	21
Able-Bodied	110	18%	103	7
Lepers and Sick	91	15%	57	34
Feeble-minded	82	13·7%	—	82
Aged/Infirm	67	11·2%	—	67
Minor Deformity	46	7·7%	46	—
Crippled	23	3·8%	17	6
Fakes	4	·6%	4	—
Total	596	—	379	217

The Blind predominate and form the largest single group in the total count and also in Sekondi, Kumasi and Tamale. They are less noticeably in the majority in other places, and in Accra the apparently Able Bodied actually exceed the number of Blind while Lepers and Sick persons are about the same in number. The Feeble-minded, in proportion to other groups are particularly noticeable in Keta, Bolgatanga, Koforidua and Cape Coast. In the latter town the figures for the count are misleading as 10 feeble-minded persons were recorded in street Observations but only 3 were out and about at the time of the Counts. The largest total of them is found in Kumasi with 25, followed by Accra with 21. A detailed analysis of the Disability totals for each town is shown in Table 6.

TABLE 5.—SHOWING ALL-OVER TOTALS FOR THE MAXIMUM COUNT IN 11 TOWNS

1. PROFESSIONAL BEGGARS

Origin	Blind	Crippled	Minor Deformity	Lepers and Others	Able-Bodied	Fakes	Total
Hausa	127	11	32	32	69	2	273
N.T. Tribes	8	—	7	12	12	1	40
Aliens	12	4	2	6	14	—	38
Ashanti/Colony	5	2	5	7	8	1	28
Total	152	17	46	57	103	4	379

11. APPARENT DESTITUATES

Origin	Blind	Crippled	Mental Eccentric		Aged Infirm		Sick and Others	Able Bodied	Total
			M	F	M	F			
Hausa	10	1	16	3	34	11	4	1	80
N. T. Tribes	2	—	21	6	6	2	13	3	53
Aliens	8	3	17	1	6	1	8	1	45
Ashanti/Colony	1	2	13	5	5	2	9	2	39
Total	21	6	65	13	50	16	34	7	217

TABLE 6.—SHOWING ANALYSIS OF MAXIMUM-MINIMUM DAY COUNTS IN EACH TOWN

Origin	TOTAL		ACCRA		SEKONDI		KOFORIDUA		CAPE COAST		TAKORADI		Kumasi	Tamale	Bolgatanga	Nsawam	Swedru	Keta
	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.						
Hausa	353	271	133	78	19	20	26	13	11	5	15	6	108	20	1	14	5	1
N.T. Tribes	93	85	37	37	4	1	2	—	3	2	4	2	15	11	15	2	—	—
Aliens	83	78	5	2	7	6	—	1	3	1	—	—	46	13	4	—	4	1
Ashanti/Colony	67	46	23	13	13	6	3	—	8	9	2	—	11	1	—	—	1	5
Total	596	480	198	130	43	33	31	14	25	17	21	8	180	45	20	16	10	7

Disability Groups	TOTAL		ACCRA		SEKONDI		KOFORIDUA		CAPE COAST		TAKORADI		Kumasi	Tamale	Bolgatanga	Nsawam	Swedru	Keta
	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.						
Blind	173	150	38	28	18	14	10	5	5	6	8	3	58	22	1	7	6	—
Able-Bodied	110	79	49	30	7	2	2	3	4	1	6	1	35	2	3	1	—	1
Lepers and Sick	91	81	36	29	4	3	—	—	5	2	2	3	26	7	9	—	1	1
Feeble-Minded	82	77	21	22	6	9	8	—	3	2	—	—	25	7	5	2	1	4
Aged and Infirm	67	43	16	3	3	3	9	2	2	2	4	—	19	6	2	5	—	1
Minor Deformity	46	24	29	10	2	2	—	—	3	1	1	—	8	1	—	1	1	—
Crippled	23	24	6	7	3	—	2	4	2	2	—	1	9	—	—	—	1	—
Fakes	4	2	3	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	596	480	198	130	43	33	31	14	25	17	21	8	180	45	20	16	10	7

5. SECTION COUNTS

Each selected section of each town was counted and recorded separately. The results show that most beggars and destitutes are found in the mornings near the large Central Markets, Lorry Parks, Railway Stations, Zongo and Mosque areas and comparatively few come into the main shopping centres. In the towns where there were few beggars only one section was counted, the Market area and surrounding streets. Results in the other towns were as follows :—

TABLE 7.—SECTIONAL TOTAL COUNTS

Town	Section	Total	Beggars	Destitutes
<i>Accra</i>	Market area and Mosque	69	64	5
	Station Rd. Zongo Lane and Kokompe	33	26	7
	Opera Sq. Cow Lane	30	18	12
	Lorry Park and Boundary Rd.	31	17	14
	High Street and Shopping area	18	11	7
	Adabraka—Rly. Junction	17	15	2
	Salaga and London Markets		nil	
<i>Kumasi</i>	Accra Rly. line	74	52	22
	Kejetia and Rly. Stn. Area	35	23	12
	Central Market	26	22	4
	Zongo	26	13	13
	Shopping Centre	12	4	8
	Asafo, Amakom	7	3	4
<i>Sekondi</i>	Market area	17	13	4
	Zongo	16	10	5
	European Town Shopping Centre	11	6	5
<i>Koforidua</i>	Market Area	17	6	17
	Zongo	6	3	3
	Broadway West Shopping Centre	5	2	3
	Nsukwa and Rly. Station	3	2	1
<i>Cape Coast</i>	Zongo	7	4	3
	Shopping Centre	7	5	2
	Market Area	6	5	1
	Hospital Area	5	3	2

6. RECORDS OF DESTITUTE DEATHS

Figures for Deaths of Destitute Persons were obtained from the Registrars in Accra, Kumasi, Tamale, Cape Coast, Sekondi/Takoradi. There were no records of such deaths in Koforidua for the period. Destitutes who had died in the Colonial Mental Hospital Accra (133 in the year under review) were excluded as being outside the scope of the present enquiry. The total number of deaths recorded for the year June 30th 1953 to June 30th 1954 were 227, of whom 22 were women. They were distributed among the five towns as follows—

<i>Kumasi</i>	<i>Accra</i>	<i>Tamale</i>	<i>Cape Coast</i>	<i>Sekondi/Takoradi</i>
120 (10F)	57 (4F)	34 (6F)	13 (2F)	3

Records of deaths of Unknown and Destitute persons are valuable as an indication of the stranger and vagrant element in the different towns. Those found dead in the streets or markets are evidence of sheer destitution. Tribal distinctions, which are indicated wherever possible, give some indication as to how far local people are involved in the problem of Destitution. We do not know for certain that all of those who died were beggars before they fell sick, a few were found injured on the main roads leading into the town many died in Hospital and some of them may have been rendered destitute by prolonged illness. 56 per cent died of a certifiable disease, 26 per cent of an unknown cause. Again, 56 per cent died in Hospital, not in fact all the same people, and 25.5 per cent were found dead in the streets, markets or on waste pieces of ground. The following figures show the Tribal Groupings.

TABLE 8.—SHOWING TRIBAL DISTRIBUTION AMONG DESTITUATES DEATHS

Town	Total	Unknown	Aliens	Fr. & G.C. N.T.s	Hausa	Ashanti/ Colony
Kumasi	120	44	3	62	4	7
Accra	57	16	7	22	7	5
Tamale	34	3	1	29	1	—
Cape Coast	13	4	—	4	—	5
Takoradi/Sekondi	3	—	1	1	1	—
Total	227	67	12	118	13	17

Out of a total of 227 deaths only 22 were those of women. Female beggars live in the towns where they beg only a very few are vagrants on their own. It is remarkable that in spite of the very large proportion of Hausa people who are beggars and destitutes only 13 Hausas are recorded among the Destitute deaths. In proportion the figure of 17 for Ashanti and the Colony is very much higher. In Kumasi there were 7 Ashantis, in Accra 3 Gas and 2 Ashantis and in Cape Coast 5 Fantis.

The highest totals were found in the three towns on the route from north to south, the highest of all in Kumasi which is the junction through which all those coming from beyond the Border pass sooner or later. The Beggar population there is a constantly changing one, swollen during the cocoa season by migrants from the north. In Kumasi the death rate of destitute persons is appreciably higher during the months October, November, December. The following tables illustrate the results in the five towns.

TABLE 9.—SHOWING PLACES WHERE DESTITUTE DEATHS OCCURRED

Place	Total	Kumasi	Accra	Tamale	C. Coast	Takoradi/ Sekondi
Hospital	128	65	33	25	4	1
Open Street or Market	58	30	16	5	5	2
Main Roads outside	21	14	1	2	4	—
Destitute Hostel	13	11	2	—	—	—
Houses in Zongo	7	—	5	2	—	—
Total	227	120	57	34	13	3

Unknown persons dying in Hospital Kumasi 9
do. Accra 8

TABLE 10.—SHOWING CAUSES OF DEATH OF DESTITUTE PERSONS

Cause of Death	Total	Kumasi	Accra	Tamale	C. Coast	Tak./Sek.
Certified Disease	128	60	37	24	6	1
Unknown Cause	59	40	15	2	2	—
Starvation/Malnutrition	22	14	2	5	1	—
Accident	18	6	3	3	4	2
Total	227	120	57	34	13	3

TABLE 11.—SHOWING QUARTERLY VARIATIONS OF INCIDENCE OF DESTITUTE DEATHS IN THE 5 TOWNS

Quarters	Total	Kumasi	Accra	Tamale	C. Coast	Tak./Sek.
Jan., Feb., Mar.	52	31	9	10	2	—
Apr., May, June	48	17	17	10	4	—
July, Aug., Sept.	59	29	14	10	5	1
Oct., Nov., Dec.	68	43	17	4	2	2

LIST OF N.T. AND ALIEN TRIBES REPRESENTED AMONG DESTITUTE DEATHS

<i>Aliens</i>		<i>Northern Territories and Haute Volta</i>			
Kroos	5	Moshie	32	Busanga	5
Yoruba	4	Zabramah	16	Grumah	3
Nuguma	1	Fulani	12	Gonja	3
Beriberi	1	Grunshie	7	Mamprushi	3
French Dahomey	1	Frafra	8	Sisalla	3
		Kusasi	8	Basare	2
		Kanjarga	6	Dagarti	2
		Wangara	6	Dagomba	1
				Sundry	1

Note.—The Ministry of Health Report for 1952 shows June, July and August as the peak period for the incidence of Deaths in the country as a whole.

7. DISTRIBUTION OF INTERVIEWS

The sample of interviews obtained this year were distributed over the 6 towns as follows:—

Kumasi	54
Tamale	40
Sekondi	14
Koforidua	14
Bolgatanga	10
Cape Coast	18

Of these 90 were Beggars, 60 Destitutes.

They included the following categories:—

Blind	50
Crippled and Deformed	15
Feeble-minded	10
Aged/Infirm	33
Lepers and Sick	29
Able-bodied	12
Fake	1
	<hr/>
	150
	<hr/>

They were living as follows:—

Sleeping out in the open	33
Living in hired rooms	44
Living with relatives	10
Living with friends	18
Living in house of Zongo Chief	37
Living in Institutions	5
Living in their own houses	3
	<hr/>
	150
	<hr/>

Beggars and Destitutes were interviewed at random as they were met in the streets and found willing to answer questions. Although some element of selection inevitably enters in we found so much similarity in many of the interviews that the sample may be considered a fair one, the same type of case occurred in all stations, there were very few striking exceptions apart from minor personal details.

CONCLUSIONS

1. It has been claimed that the increase of begging and destitution in the Gold Coast is due to the weakening of tribal and family responsibility and the drift towards the towns. There is a small amount of truth in this as far as large towns attract labour and labour, a great deal of it, comes from the North, which inevitably means separation from families. Again, Hospitals attract the sick from surrounding areas, Leper Settlements and Treatment Centres tend to cause an artificial increase in the number of lepers in the places nearby as those who are discharged or receiving out-patient treatment tend to remain in the nearest town and beg rather than return to distant homes. Very few people found begging in the streets and classed as Destitutes belonged to the locality where they were found except those living in the Zongo, where a different motive enters into their begging. The local Destitute total for the 9 towns in Ashanti and the Colony was only 39 of whom 18 were feeble-minded or eccentric. The Beggar total is 28 of whom 8 were able-bodied and fit for work. This leaves about 41 people on the streets of these towns who could be called local people although they do not belong even then to the local tribe of the immediate neighbourhood, an Ewe in Kumasi or an Ashanti in Accra for example. This figure is negligible among the total population and cannot be said to indicate a weakening of family responsibility towards the unfortunate.

With the other groups different considerations are involved. Begging is an accepted occupation among the Hausa people and the very large number of Hausa beggars is not necessarily an indication that family ties are weakened but rather a normal issue when the Hausa population is increased by immigration. For Aliens and people from the Northern Territories economic necessity compels them to separate from their families in the first instance and destitution follows for some of them at a later stage.

2. People from the Northern Territories, especially French Territory, have been migrating south for many years in search of work. Most of them either settle in the south for their working lives or return home after a short period with their savings. Only a comparatively small percentage of all migrant labour becomes derelict while in the South. But the demand for labour has increased in recent years and facilities for travel have improved so that inevitably the number of those who meet with accident or misfortune has increased in proportion. A scheme for repatriating Derelict Labour has been in operation for some time and is mostly concerned with Labourers from the Northern Territories or French Territory, though not exclusively. It can only be a satisfactory answer for those who have families to care for them. Those who will never work again or have been away from home for years find all too often that when the season of food shortage comes round they are a burden at home and not always welcome. Many of them drift south again to beg.

3. There is no evidence as far as we could tell that unemployment has any effect on Destitution at present. There may be temporary beggars in Accra and Kumasi who came south to look for work and failed to find it or the friends they hoped to join. We did not come across examples of this. None of the Able-bodied interviewed expressed any concern to find work.

4. The question of sickness and old age is entirely different. This could be called a cause of Destitution, particularly among strangers. Some form of relief for such cases might well be considered, they are not a large group and their plight is sad. Old people do not want to be sent away from the place they know and have lived in for years to die in a part of the country they do not know. Even though they are strangers themselves they are not as a rule migrant strangers and have been for some time in the place where they are found.

Some of the sick needed prolonged treatment for sores and ulcers and adequate food and shelter during the process of their cure. If this was available they might then be made fit for normal life, as it is they barely manage to exist and their cure is delayed by their circumstances.

5. Only a few of the Destitutes found on the streets are likely to accept Institution life if it means that they cannot wander out to beg. The Lepers, the Sick and some of the Aged are the most likely to welcome shelter, beggar women with children might perhaps be included. The Feeble-minded need to be removed from the streets but they require special accommodation and some form of coercion. It is impossible to reason with or even talk to some of them, they remain fixed all day on their selected spot of ground and it is obvious that it would be extremely difficult to remove them to a place of safety by methods of persuasion only. Once in a Hostel or Institution they have to be fed and kept clean if they are not to be a source of infection to others and above all they must be prevented from wandering away again to create a local problem which would arouse public resentment.

6. Although most Beggars become proficient at their trade and are able to make an adequate livelihood this does not mean that nothing needs to be done for them. The Blind and Crippled could not work unless special training was available for them and organised industries established. Most of those on the streets to-day are too old to change their way of life but there are some younger beggars and a very few children amongst them for whom steps might be taken to prevent them from remaining to swell the total of those who live on private charity for yet another generation. Only the old and decrepit among the Blind and Crippled would be likely to accept Institution life.

7. A rough calculation based on the figures obtained in the street counts shows that the cost to the public unofficially is very considerable.

380 Beggars earning 5s. a day costs £95 per day

220 Destitutes earning 2s. a day costs £22 per day

£117

These figures are of course guesswork and only an approximate estimate but they give some indication of the seriousness of the problem and the necessity for checking the able-bodied and those who need not beg. There will always be people who cannot work and must beg in default of any other provision but in view of the amount of money that is being contributed towards this purpose the alternative of a controlled, official expenditure does not seem to be unreasonable.

8. The problem of Destitutes in the Northern Territories would appear to require local treatment in the North. Seasonal food shortage is an important factor but as an economic problem it falls outside the scope of this enquiry. For the rest Destitution, so much more noticeable here than in the South, is a question of sickness, old age and infirmity more than anything else.

9. Without some form of coercion it is unlikely that much can be done to remove Beggars and Destitutes from the streets. Bye-laws made by Local Authorities might remove the most troublesome from the busiest sections of the towns. Hostel accommodation would provide for the oldest and feeblest but we have to remember that for many of them there is at present no alternative but to beg and that the profession of Beggar is not despised among a large section of the community and has the sanction of custom.

KUMASI
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